

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Office of Fire and Aviation
3833 South Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

February 10, 2005

In Reply Refer To:
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EMS Transmission 02/10/05
Instruction Memorandum FA IM 2005-012
Expires: 09/30/06

To: State Directors

From: Director, Office of Fire and Aviation

Subject: Casual Payment Center Procedures

DD: 02/28/2005

Program Area: Payment of Emergency Firefighters

Purpose: Establish policies and procedures for the centralized Casual Payment Center for emergency firefighters.

Policy/Action: This Instruction Memorandum (IM) outlines responsibilities and payment procedures for emergency firefighters hired by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) effective January 1, 2005. The Casual Payment Center will process all casual hire payments for all emergency firefighters hired through the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), BLM, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS).

Timeframe: This guidance takes effect on the date of issuance of this IM.

Budget Impact: None

Background: Many changes in the payment process for emergency firefighters (EFF) have occurred over the past several years. The most significant change is the redesign of the EFF/Vendor Pay System. By way of the redesign, EFF pay is now housed on the Federal Personnel Payroll System (FPPS) and is no longer a stand-alone system.

Another change taking place is the development of a new financial system shared by all Departments of the Interior (DOI) agencies. The implementation of the Financial Business and Management System (FBMS) will begin as early as October 2005.

As a result of these changes, the BIA, BLM and FWS entered into an agreement to centralize the processing of EFF payroll for casual hires. BLM will manage the operation of a centralized Casual Payment Center. The payment center became operational January 1, 2005, and is located at 1249 S. Vinnell Way, Suite 108, Boise, Idaho, 83709.

To expedite processing of EFF payments, it is the responsibility of the hiring unit to ensure that documentation is completed accurately and checked prior to submission to the Casual Payment Center. The following attachments are intended to facilitate this process:

- Attachment 1: Casual Hire and Payment Process (responsibilities by unit)
- Attachment 2: Single Resource Casual Hire Information Form, PMS 934
- Attachment 3: Casual Hire Payment Information
- Attachment 4: Emergency Firefighter Timesheet (OF-288) Audit Procedures
- Attachment 5: Memorandum Template (to accompany submitted timesheets)
- Attachment 6: Approving Official Contact Information/ State Point of Contact Information

In order to provide prompt payment, hiring units should process EFF time reports on a bi-weekly basis (or sooner if the hiring duration is shorter) and transmit them within two days of receipt. Our goal is for casual hires to receive their payment within seven days, and no later than 14 days from their last date worked.

When incomplete information is received, it is necessary that the Casual Payment Center has current contact information. Each hiring unit will need to designate an Approving Official who will audit timesheets and approve them for payment prior to forwarding them to the payment center. Each state should also designate a contact at the state office-level that can assist the payment center if there are questions or concerns. Please provide a list of Approving Officials and State Contacts by completing Attachment 6, and submit your response to casual_pay@blm.gov no later than February 28, 2005.

All inquiries concerning lost or stolen checks, unemployment benefits, and employment verifications should be directed to the Casual Payment Center for official response. Inquiries may be made by mail, email, or by calling the payment center at 877-471-2262.

Inquiries concerning prescribed fire hours worked, training hours and other payment information can be obtained through the Casual Pay Datamart which is housed at the Department of Interior, National Business Center. Training for the Casual Pay Datamart will be conducted at the Incident Business State Contact meeting in March. Training was provided for those individuals who served as a Casual Pay Specialist last year.

The National Business Center (NBC), Payroll Operations Division (POD), will be responsible for processing federal, state and local tax levies, IRS agreements, commercial garnishments, bankruptcies, wage and wage-related debts for casual hires of the BLM. Effective January 3, 2005, all original documentation to support collection of debts from

wages that are due to casual hires should be sent to the POD, Attn: Debt Management Branch, D-2640, P. O. Box 272030, Denver, CO 80227-9030.

With the establishment of a centralized payment center, the need for the Casual Pay Specialist (CPS) to process EFF payroll in the field will no longer exist; however, we recognize the benefits of providing training opportunities to those involved in the hiring, preparation and audit of the Emergency Firefighter Timesheet (OF-288). If your field or state office has identified individuals that would benefit from a detail to the Casual Payment Center, email their name, phone number and dates of availability to the payment center at casual_pay@blm.gov.

Directives Affected: None

Coordination: The above action was coordinated with the BIA, FWS, and the Department of the Interior, Office of Wildland Fire Coordination.

Offices with a Union: Not applicable

Contact: Questions concerning these procedures or the Casual Payment Center should be directed to Kristy Felty, Casual Payment Center Manager at 208-947-3791.

Signed by:
Debie Chivers
Acting Director

Authenticated by:
Pat Lewis
Supervisory Mgmt. Asst.

Attachments:

- Casual Hire and Payment Process (1 p)
- Single Resource Casual Hire Information Form, PMS 934 (1 p)
- Casual Hire payment information (English/Spanish), ETA Electronic Transfer Account brochure and the Direct Deposit sign-up form, SF 1199A (3 pp)
- OF-288 Audit Procedures (1 p)
- Template of Memorandum to Casual Payment Center (1 p)
- Approving Official Contact Information/ State POC Information (1 p)

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